

A NEW RACE OF OLIVACEOUS WOODCREEPER FROM MÉXICO

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RECENTLY I have had occasion to re-identify the 18 specimens of Olivaceous Woodcreeper (*Sittasomus griseicapillus*) in my collection. All of these are from México, three from Veracruz, two from Chiapas, one from San Luis Potosí, and 12 from the Gómez Farías region of southwestern Tamaulipas. The darkest of the series, both above and below, are those from Veracruz (two males and a female from the Río Atoyac, four miles north of Potrero). These we may consider representative of the race *S. g. sylvioides* Lafresnaye, the type locality of that form having been restricted by Bangs and Peters (1928. *Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool.*, 68:392) to the State of Veracruz, México. The female is slightly paler than the males, especially on the under parts.

The two Chiapas specimens, males from the vicinity of Monserrate, are much like the Veracruz specimens just discussed except that they are longer-billed and a trifle paler. Bill-length in the Veracruz males is 13.5, 14.0 mm.; in the Chiapas males, 15.5, 15.5. Wing-length in the Veracruz males is, respectively, 81, 81; in the Chiapas males, 79, 80; tail-length, again respectively, is 76, 76; 78, 81. In the latter Veracruz specimen the tail-spine is obviously worn, so that measurement is of doubtful value.

Tail-length in *Sittasomus griseicapillus* varies a great deal, and I am not sure that averaging and comparing tail measurements serves any useful end. In some specimens before me the terminal tail-spine is wholly absent as a result of wear; in others it is short or missing altogether even though the feathers are unworn. A male taken along the Río Sabinas, near Gómez Farías, Tamaulipas, on March 10, 1949, by William B. Heed, is quite fresh-plumaged and unworn, yet the long middle rectrices are virtually without spine at the tip, and the actual tail-tip is not the end of the longest feather's rachis but the most distal part of that feather's inner web. Some southwestern Tamaulipas specimens have extraordinarily long tail-spines. A male taken by J. H. Poppy and E. K. Miller at the Rancho del Cielo, near Gómez Farías, on July 28, 1948, has a tail length of 87 mm., the terminal spine on the left middle rectrix being fully 12 mm. long. Length of the unworn tail-spine, and tail-length itself, may be correlated with age. The longest-spined Mexican birds I have handled are from Tamaulipas. I have not recently examined specimens from south of México.

My Veracruz and Chiapas specimens are dark, as a group, in comparison with the 12 Tamaulipas specimens (11 males, one female) and one San Luis

Potosí specimen (female from Mais) in my series. When I first compared all these birds I noticed that some Tamaulipas males were unusually long-tailed, but I dismissed from my mind the possibility that they might represent the race *S. g. jaliscensis* Nelson, because that race was said to be slightly darker on the under parts than *sylvioides* (see Nelson, 1900. *Auk*, 17:265; and Ridgway, 1911. *Bull. U.S. Nat. Mus.*, 50, pt. 5: 283). Since all of my Tamaulipas and San Luis Potosí specimens were too pale below for *sylvioides*, they would obviously be too pale for *jaliscensis*.

Dr. Herbert Friedmann kindly lent me the type of *jaliscensis* as well as four specimens (one male and three females) of "*sylvioides*" collected by Nelson and Goldman at Metlaltoyuca, Puebla, in February, 1898. With this helpful material at hand, I have gone over my series again. The four Puebla birds are a little paler than my Veracruz and Chiapas specimens. Wetmore used this same Puebla series in identifying as *sylvioides* specimens recently collected by Carriker in Veracruz (Cerro de Tuxtla and Volcán San Martín). He commented (1943. *Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus.*, 93:278) that the Puebla birds were "slightly paler than birds from Veracruz." The Puebla specimens do not appear to have undergone post-mortem fading, though such "foxing" is surely to be borne in mind when we are dealing with dendrocolaptids.

As for the type of *jaliscensis*, a male taken March 17, 1897, at San Sebastian, Jalisco, we must not discount the possibility that, with the passing of the years, the specimen has faded. In any event, its under parts certainly do not impress me as being "darker grayish brown" (Nelson, *loc. cit.*) than those of Veracruz and Chiapas *sylvioides* at hand. It is, however, definitely darker below than all the Tamaulipas and San Luis Potosí specimens before me, and it is also longer-billed and slightly longer-tailed. Confirming Nelson's tail-measurement (89 mm.) of his type of *jaliscensis* is impossible, for part of the tail is now missing. In none of my Tamaulipas males does tail length reach 89 mm., though in two specimens it reaches 87 mm.

Since the Tamaulipas and San Luis Potosí birds are neither *sylvioides* nor *jaliscensis*, and since no name seems to be available for them, I suggest that they be called

***Sittasomus griseicapillus harrisoni* new subspecies.**

Type: From Rancho del Cielo, five miles northwest of Gómez Farías, Tamaulipas, México; 3300 feet. Adult male, no. 12893, Sutton Collection, collected March 30, 1949, by Paul S. Martin (original number 172). Type at the Museum of Zoology, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

Diagnosis: Similar to *S. g. sylvioides* Lafresnaye as known from Veracruz and Chiapas, but paler, especially on the chin, throat, and chest, where the gray tends to be slightly more ashy and less olivaceous than in *sylvioides*. Similar to *S. g. jaliscensis* Nelson of Jalisco, but paler below. In size, inter-

mediate between these two races, but nearer *jaliscensis*, especially in wing- and tail-length; in color not intermediate, but paler than either.

Range: So far as is known, the foothill country of southwestern Tamaulipas and eastern San Luis Potosí, intergrading with *sylvioides* in Puebla. Areas of intergradation with *jaliscensis* are not known.

Description of Type: Chin, throat, sides of head, sides of neck, and breast Grayish Olive, passing through Citrine Drab on the belly to Tawny on the under tail coverts and to Cinnamon Brown on the under side of the tail. Whole top of head and hind neck Dark Olive Gray, passing through Olive Brown on the upper back, wing coverts, and fore part of the primaries (in the folded wing) to bright Russet on the lower back, rump, tertials, upper tail coverts, and upper side of the tail. Inner webs of primaries dark Mummy Brown at their tips. Capitalized words here used are from Ridgway's "Color Standards and Nomenclature," 1912.

Measurements of Type: wing, 80 mm.; tail, 80; culmen, 13.0; tarsus, 17.0. Unworn spine at tip of middle rectrices, 7 mm.

Remarks: The 11 male Tamaulipas specimens used in this study (including the type of *harrisoni*) range in wing-length from 76 to 83 mm., averaging 79.9 mm. The type of *jaliscensis* has a wing length of 84 mm. Three of my Tamaulipas specimens are so worn that their tail-length is meaningless. The range of tail-length in the eight full-tailed specimens is 77 to 87 mm. (average, 81). Nelson's tail-measurement for the type of *jaliscensis* was 89 mm. In bill-length my 11 male *harrisoni* range from 13.0 to 15.0 mm. (average, 13.8); in *jaliscensis* it is, according to its describer, 16 mm. To obtain this measurement in the type myself I had to part the feathers considerably at the base of the culmen. What one easily sees of the culmen without separating the feathers, measures 15 mm. or a little less. I know of no Jaliscan specimens of *Sittasomus griseicapillus* aside from the type.

I take pleasure in naming this new form in honor of Mr. Frank Harrison, who resides at the type locality, and who has been unfailingly kind to me and to many of my students and friends who have visited him from time to time.

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